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FRENCH'S ACTING EDITION

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PENDRUDGE V. PRETTIWON

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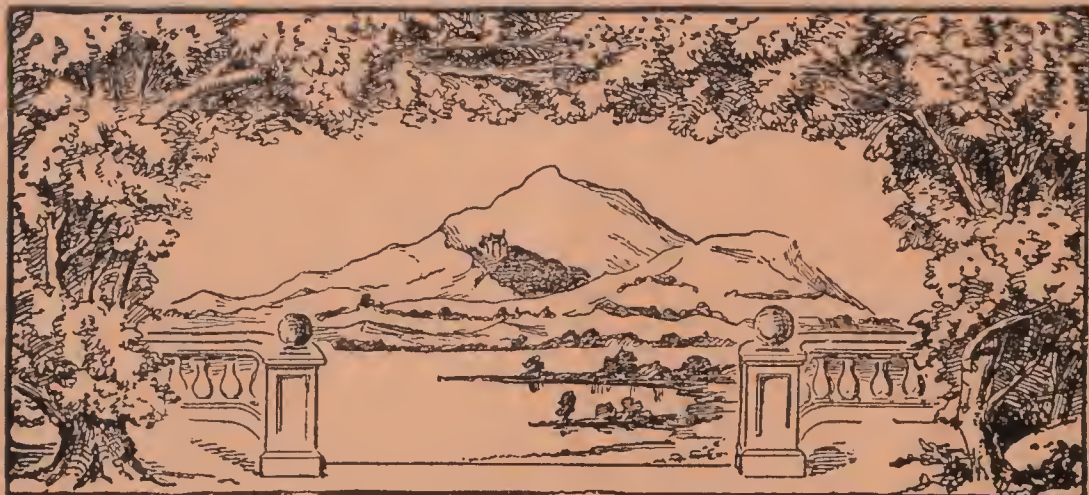
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PENDRUDGE v. PRETTIWON;

OR,

A VERY CIVIL CASE.

BY

JOHN WALLACE, JUN.

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PENDRUDGE v. PRETTIWON.

SCENE.—A CIVIL COURT.

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CLERK OF COURT. (*rising, and reading from a paper*)
Pendrudge versus Prettiwon : In this case the Plaintiff, Peter Pendrudge, sues the Defendant, Ethel Prettiwon, for

PENDRUDGE V. PRETTIWON.

CHARACTERS.

Sir Justin Fairly (*The Judge*)

Mr. Scribewell, {Q.C. } (*Counsel for Plaintiff*)
Mr. Maleman

Mr. Handsome, Q.C. } (*Counsel for Defendant*)
Mr. Lovelady

Peter Pendrudge (*The Plaintiff*)

Ethel Prettiwon (*The Defendant*)

Mr. Isaac Buysell (*A General Merchant*) ...

Mr. Matthew Manley (*Secretary of The Male
Clerks' Association*)

Mr. Josiah Pompous (*Chairman of The
Commercial Employers' Union*) ...

John Prettiwon (*Defendant's Father*) ...

Mrs. Martha Meekeye (*Plaintiff's Landlady*)

Jessie Meekeye (*Mrs. M.'s Daughter*) ...

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CLERK OF COURT. (*rising, and reading from a paper*)
Pendrudge versus Prettiwon : In this case the Plaintiff, Peter Pendrudge, sues the Defendant, Ethel Prettiwon, for

damages sustained by the said Plaintiff by loss of situation, livelihood, and means caused by the said Defendant's having practised arts, wiles, and inducements against the interests and well-being of said Plaintiff, thereby depriving him of a situation or place, and rendering him, the said Plaintiff, unemployed, impecunious, and unhappy. The Plaintiff prays the Court to grant an injunction against the said Defendant, restraining and forbidding her from practising such arts, wiles, and inducements in the future against the said Plaintiff, or his kind, or against their interest or well-being ; and he also prays the Court to grant him damages against the said Defendant for the said losses he has incurred by and through her conduct and actions. (*sits down*)

JUDGE. Who appears for the Plaintiff ?

MR. SCRIBEWELL. I do, m'lord. (*rises and bows to JUDGE*)

JUDGE. Who is with you, Mr. Scribewell ?

MR. S. Mr. Maleman, m'lord. (*sits down, and MR. MALEMAN rises, bows to JUDGE, and then resumes his seat*)

JUDGE. Who appears for the defendant ?

MR. HANDSOME. (*rising and bowing*) I do, if it please your lordship.

JUDGE. Is any one with you, Mr. Handsome ?

MR. H. Yes, m'lord—Mr. Lovelady. (*resumes his seat as MR. LOVELADY rises, bows and sits down again*)

MR. SCRIBEWELL now rises to open for Plaintiff. He gives the usual preliminary cough, hitches up his gown, etc., and refers at frequent intervals to his brief.

MR. S. M'lord and Gentlemen of the Jury : This case of *Pendrudge versus Prettiwon* is indeed a case where extremes meet. The Plaintiff is Peter Pendrudge, the Defendant is Ethel Prettiwon. These names are singularly characteristic of their owners, for while the Plaintiff is actually a pen drudge, a slave of the *pen*—of that weapon which some of us know is mightier, heavier, crueller, fiercer, keener, and many-other-ers than the sword—the Defendant is a real, a veritable *pretty one*. She is—to use a stock phrase of our friends of the press (*here the REPORTERS all rise, bow and sit down again, without ceasing to write however*) “of somewhat prepossessing appearance.” But, gentlemen of the jury, if you have any blind eyes among you, if any of you happen to be afflicted with a deaf ear, turn, I beseech you, those blind eyes, those deaf ears to the syren-like wiles, the specious pleading of the fair defendant. On the other hand, though, I beg of you to open wide your eyes, and, so to speak, pull back your ears, so that you may see and hear the honest plaint of the unhappy plaintiff, who, until quite recently was

in constant employment as bookkeeper in the office of Mr. Mr. Isaac Buysell, general merchant. He is *not* now in such, or in *any* employment, having been ousted therefrom by the superior personal charms of the fair yet most *unfair* Defendant. Not that the mere possession by the Defendant of such charms is any fault or felony. Some of us here present may be the proud parents of pretty daughters (*here the JUDGE, one or two COUNSEL, a few JURYMEN, and an USHER and a POLICEMAN should draw themselves up, cough, wink, smile, etc., at this allusion, the officials especially puffing themselves out, then quickly "recovering" and crying out "Silence!"*) I will venture to say we are all, from the highest to the lowest, more or less susceptible to the arts and wiles of lovely woman. (*Here the JUDGE and others again cough and look "conscious."*) In its right place, in its appointed sphere female beauty is, if I may quote a now well-established classic, "a boon and a blessing to men." But alas, m'lord and gentlemen of the jury, when such loveliness and beauty, such charming devices, such fascinating allurements are used as a bait, a decoy, or a trap, is not the case entirely altered? Some of us here present, m'lord and gentlemen of the jury, may at some time have fallen victims to the arts, wiles, snares and traps of lovely but designing woman! (*JUDGE, COUNSEL, a few JURYMEN, and one or two OFFICIALS look sad, shake their heads, etc., a big, stout POLICEMAN putting a red handkerchief to his eyes and blubbering loudly until called to order, when he "recovers"*) I may at once say that it is owing to, and through her practising such arts, wiles, inducements and blandishments that the Defendant secured her present position of lady clerk, bookkeeper and stenographer in the counting-house of Mr. Buysell, to the displacement and loss of the Plaintiff. It may be asked how or in what manner or by what means was this accomplished?

JUDGE. As a matter of fact I was—er—about to ask you a question—er—to that effect, Mr. Scribewell.

MR. S. And my answer shall be prompt and to the point, m'lord. The merchant already referred to, having in his own mind a scheme for reducing his working expenses by employing female instead of male clerks at, of course, a lower rate of pay in his counting-house, inserted an advertisement in a daily paper accordingly. He received no less than seventeen thousand nine hundred and fifty-eight replies seeking the "desirable situation." Among others was one from Defendant, enclosing her photo, and a particularly persuasive, wheedling, coaxing letter, begging him, Mr. Buysell, to *please*—oh! "*please engage me*" underlined—very much underlined! Mr. Buysell is but a man, an ordi-

nary man, gentleman of the jury, and what could he do but yield to the imploring epistle, and the undoubted charms, as depicted on the photo of Defendant? What could he do, I ask, but request a personal interview?—and when this was granted it was simply a matter of the Defendant coming, seeing, and conquering. She obtained the situation, and the Plaintiff obtained his discharge on one and the same day. You shall presently hear to what pushes and pinches the Plaintiff has been driven, and how genuinely hard up he must be. Plaintiff and Defendant are extreme specimens of two opposing types of labour—the original male clerks, and the ever-increasing lady bookkeepers. It is for you, gentlemen of the jury, and for you, m'lord, to say and to show by your verdict and your judgment which type is to make the greater imprint. I will now call the Plaintiff, Peter Pendrudge! (USHERS and POLICEMEN call out the name, and PLAINTIFF goes into the witness-box and is “sworn” in dumb show, as are all the witnesses, by an official who turns his back to the audience, and hurriedly mumbles out some sentences in imitation of the usual oath) Is your name Peter Pendrudge?

PETER. It is, sir.

MR. S. Are you by profession a bookkeeper?

PETER. Yes, sir.

MR. S. Are you at present in any employment?

PETER. No, sir, I'm sorry to say I'm not.

MR. S. Very good. Such being the case, why, or through what cause did you leave your situation?

PETER. I was requested to leave because my employer was about to engage a lady clerk.

MR. S. And who was that lady clerk?

PETER. The Defendant, Miss Ethel Prettiwon.

MR. S. Are you still disengaged or unemployed?

PETER. Yes, sir. I am still disengaged, unemployed and out of collar.

JUDGE. Out of collar! Did you say out of collar, witness?

PETER. Yes, my lord; out of collar. (MR. SCRIBEWELL frowns at PETER)

JUDGE. Er—do I understand you to mean by that expression of—er—“out of collar” that you are out of—er—that is to say—er—quite destitute of even a collar?

PETER. Well—er—not quite exactly, your lordship—er—

MR. S. (*interposing*) May I venture to explain, with great submission, m'lord, that the expression of “out of collar” is a, perhaps, somewhat slangy synonym for being out of work.

JUDGE. Thank you, Mr. Scribewell, I will make a note of it. (*writes*) Out—of—collar—synonymous—with out—of—work. (*nods to MR. SCRIBEWELL to resume*)

MR. S. Being—er—out—that is to say, unemployed, Mr. Pendrudge—for how long?—

PETER. I have been out of a “sit,” I mean unemployed, for seven months.

MR. S. I’m sorry to hear it. Well, being unemployed for so long a period you are naturally rather—well—to put it plainly—hard up?

PETER. To put it as plainly as *I* can put it, sir, I’m just about stony broke!

JUDGE. I beg your pardon—did you—er—say stony broke?

PETER. I did, my lord. I’m just about stony broke!

JUDGE. Really you astonish me! Do you wish the Court to understand that you have come down to breaking stones?

MR. S. Pray permit me to explain to your lordship that the—er—term “stony broke” signifies an extremely *hard* state of affairs, referring especially to paucity or total lack of cash.

JUDGE. I see. Is this a new century saying, Mr. Scribewell?

MR. S. No, m’lord. It was frequently used during last century. (*JUDGE writes and nods as before*) During the period of seven months for which you have been unemployed, Mr. Pendrudge, have you made any efforts to obtain other situations?

PETER. Oh, yes, sir. I have spent a great deal of time and some money in applying for various kinds of places.

MR. S. To what, then, do you attribute the fact of your still being out of a situation?

PETER. Well, one reason is that there are far too many male clerks for the number of situations available, but the principal reason is that many employers are taking on lady clerks, who work for less wages.

MR. S. Did the Defendant offer her services at a lower rate than your employer was paying you for yours?

PETER. Oh, yes, sir! She took on the tack at about two-thirds of the screw I was receiving.

JUDGE. Really, Mr. Scribewell, I must beg of you to—er—that is to elicit more intelligible replies from the witness. If I have heard correctly he has just said that she (the Defendant) took on the tack at about two-thirds of the screw which he (Plaintiff) was receiving?

MR. S. Yes, m’lord; I think those were his words.

JUDGE. Well, what in the name of our mother tongue or the Queen's English do they mean?

MR. S. To "take on" is to undertake or to accept the doing or working of, or at, anything, m'lord; a "tack" is what some tradesmen would term a job, and really comprises any employment or work; and "screw" means salary or wages.

JUDGE. So that in other, and—er—more correct language, she (that is Defendant) undertook to work at about two-thirds of the—er—salary or wages which he (Plaintiff) had been receiving?

MR. S. You have exactly hit upon witness's meaning, m'lord.

JUDGE. I'm glad to hear it; but I should prefer to be able to hit his meaning the first time, without so much—er—as I might call it—er—"long range sighting." (COUNSEL nudges, winks and smiles at each other; then the OFFICERS seeing there is a joke on, laugh out boisterously, until called to order by shouting "Silence!" at each other. This manœuvre may be repeated ad lib—especially when the JUDGE makes a joke)

MR. S. Your lordship is quite justified in thus making a target or butt of my somewhat slangy witness. (laughter, as before) Seriously, though, Mr. Pendrudge, please avoid the use of any further orthographical ambiguities in future.

PETER. Ortho—which? I beg pardon, sir, but I don't quite catch on to your meaning.

MR. S. I said orthographical ambiguities. In other words please speak in plain and polite English. (PETER bows) To resume: Though the question may be somewhat personal, not to say painful to you, have you been reduced to any serious straits or expedencies in consequence of your unfortunate position?

PETER. I have indeed, sir.

MR. S. You are an orphan, I think?

PETER. I am, sir. I have neither father nor mother.

MR. S. Do you live in lodgings?

PETER. Yes, sir, I do.

MR. S. At the house of Mrs. Meekeye, a widow lady?

PETER. Yes, sir. That's where my "digs" lie—I beg pardon, that's where I hang out—I mean lodge. (JUDGE looks up at PETER, and frowns and glares at him, and MR. S. shakes his brief and his head at him, but neither speaks)

MR. S. Pray bear in mind your promise *re* plain English. Mr. Pendrudge. You live in lodgings, then, in the house of Mrs. Meekeye, a widow lady. Are you in arrears with your landlady for payment of your board and lodging?

PETER. In arrears—well, what do you think, sir?

JUDGE. (*sternly*) It does not concern you to know what Counsel thinks, witness. Answer the question.

PETER. (*sighing*) I owe my kind landlady for a good many weeks' board and lodging, sir.

(*Here MRS. MEEKEYE puts a handkerchief to her eyes, and cries. She is comforted by her daughter and "silenced" by the OFFICIALS.*)

MR. S. Have you been compelled, or have you endeavoured to realise funds by the disposal of your personal goods and chattels?

PETER. (*sighing heavily*) Oh, dear, yes, sir! I have had to raise the wind pretty often by sticking my few bits of traps up the spout.

MR. S. (*hurriedly, and again shaking his brief, etc., at PETER*) And, of course——

JUDGE. Stop—stop a moment, please. (*writes, then reads what he has written*) The witness states that—er—he has had to "raise the wind." (MR. SCRIBEWELL *nods feebly*) This appears to be a somewhat—er—nautical expression; but I must confess I am—er—hopelessly at sea as to its meaning. You understand me, Mr. Scribewell. I am utterly at sea. (*laughter, etc., as before*) Then he speaks of—er—his "bits of traps." Did you, then—er—keep a horse and trap, Mr.—er—Pendrudge?

PETER. Not exactly, my lord. But I had a bike.

JUDGE. A what?

PETER. A bike—a bicycle, my lord.

JUDGE. Then, you see, Mr. Scribewell, I am rather—er—nonplussed to hear witness say that he had to raise the wind by sticking his bits of traps—which I understand included a bike, or bicycle—"up the spout!" Now—er—what kind of spout could possibly form a receptacle for so comparatively bulky an article, or "trap," as a bicycle, and did witness—er—secrete his so-called "traps" up a spout in order to save them from being seized by his creditors?

MR. S. (*in a tired voice*) With great submission and regret I must inform your lordship that you have entirely misapprehended witness's meaning. With your lordship's permission I will—shall I say translate his words for you—"Raising the wind" is to raise funds; "bits of traps" comprise all movable articles and impedimenta, and "putting them up the spout," being interpreted, means pledging them with a pawnbroker, in point of fact pawning them.

JUDGE. I am obliged by your elucidation, Mr. Scribewell; but, really, this verbal cross-firing is becoming somewhat tiresome. (MR. SCRIBEWELL *bows*) As bad, in fact, as—er—

what shall I say?—as an attack of the *Boers*! (*here great merriment is expressed by all in court; several repeating the words "attack of the Boers" (bores); all "recover" as before*)

MR. S. With great respect, I will venture to compliment your lordship upon your particularly happy and well-timed witticism. (*he and JUDGE bow to each other*)

JUDGE. Marshal! (*the MARSHAL rises*) be good enough to go to the library and bring me an up-to-date dictionary of slang. (*MARSHAL bows and retires, returning after awhile with a book, which he hands to JUDGE; but the proceedings are not delayed whilst he is away*) Meanwhile, Mr. Scribewell, I shall be obliged if you will be so kind as to translate for me the witness's evidence, whenever I may so desire it.

MR. S. (*bowing*) I should much appreciate the honour and favour of complying with your lordship's request; but happily for myself, I am now about to turn over the witness to my learned friend on the other side. Perhaps he may be able to elicit more easily-understood evidence.

With a grim smile and a wink at his opponent, MR. SCRIBEWELL resumes his seat, and MR. HANDSOME rises to cross-examine PETER.

MR. HANDSOME. Now, Mr.—ah—Peter Pendrudge, I have a question or two to ask you.

PETER. All right, sir; kick off, please. I beg pardon. I'm quite ready, so kindly begin, sir.

MR. H. Well, to *begin* with, sir, I may tell you that I simply won't accept any statement or reply from you if you intersperse such with slang or other vulgarities. So now to proceed. You have alleged that the Defendant practised certain arts, wiles, and inducements to persuade your employer to, in short, to become *her* employer?

PETER. Yes, sir, I have said so, and *still* say so.

MR. H. Very good. Now, of what, or in what, did those alleged arts, wiles, and inducements consist?

PETER. Well, they consisted, for one thing, of sending him *her* photo.

MR. H. By "him" I presume you refer to your then employer?

PETER. I do, sir.

MR. H. Did you see that particular photo?

PETER. I did, sir.

MR. H. Is *that* the photo? (*passes photo to PETER*)

PETER. (*looking carefully at photo*) Yes, sir. As far as I can remember that is the identical one.

MR. H. Very good, then. Now please be kind enough to pass on that "identical" photo to his lordship, and thence

to the gentlemen of the jury. (*the photo is "passed on," the JUDGE, and afterwards some of the JURYMEN smiling and winking at it, and looking round the court at the fair original*) Now, Mr. Pendrudge, what have you to say against that photo?

PETER. What have I—er—I don't quite catch on—I mean perceive——

MR. H. You don't, eh? Well, to put it in another form: What have you to say against the fact of Miss Prettiwon, the Defendant, sending that photo to her prospective employer?

PETER. Well—er—I look upon it as the thin end of the wedge, so to speak.

MR. H. The thin end of the wedge. I understand you to say you look upon that photo, and (or) its being sent to a certain gentleman, as the thin end of the wedge? (PETER nods) Very good, sir. What, then, did you, or *do* you consider the advent of Miss Prettiwon herself into the office?

PETER. I should say *she* was the wedge itself, which split the office-staff! (*laughter, etc., as before*)

MR. H. Ve-ry good, indeed. Very witty, very gallant, very gentlemanly, is it not? Pray observe, gentlemen of the jury, the Plaintiff has described the fair defendant as the wedge which split the office-staff. Some of you may not agree with me in describing that remark as being witty, gentlemanly, or gallant. Some of you, indeed, may look upon such expressions used about a fair young maiden as being the quintessence of caddishness! Well, we won't argue upon *that* point, gentlemen of the jury; I will just leave it for your consideration. Now you say you are unhappy?

PETER. I do.

MR. H. As to your unhappiness, well, I presume you do not—ah—profess to be a particularly cheerful individual?

PETER. Am I obliged to answer that question?

JUDGE. Yes; you must answer the question, witness.

PETER. Well, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury, I—ah—think that if the learned counsel were unemployed for seven months and had to subsist on a few shillings per week, he would not be quite so—er—ah——

MR. H. (*angrily*) Well, sir, not quite so what?

PETER. Well, sir, shall we say not quite so *handsome*?

Laughter, "hear, hear!" and business of suppression.

MR. H. One more question, Mr.—ah—Pendrudge, and I will then gladly dismiss you. Has it ever occurred to you that if you succeed in your suit, and obtain damages, and an injunction of dismissal against the Defendant, that

she will then become unemployed, impecunious, and **un** happy?

PETER. I cannot say that any such thought has occurred to me.

MR. H. (*bowing to him*) Thank you, sir—for something! For a most important point *against* yourself! (*He sits, and PETER stands down*)

MR. S. (*rising and calling*) Martha Meekeye! (MARTHA MEEKEYE, whose characteristics may be gathered from her name, should be got up as a middle-aged woman, of the “lower middle class”; she is shown into witness-box)

MR. S. Are you Mrs. Martha Meekeye?

MRS. MEEKEYE. Yes, if you please, sir.

MR. S. Are you the relict, that is to say the widow, of the late John Meekeye?

MRS. M. Yes, sir; if you don't mind, I am, sir.

MR. S. I suppose my “minding,” or otherwise, would not alter or affect the lamentable fact, eh? Do you live, or reside at 17, Upper Down-street?

MRS. M. Yes, sir, please.

MR. S. Have you any son, or sons, or other male relatives who support you, or contribute towards your support?

MRS. M. No, sir; I'm sorry to say I haven't; only——

MR. S. One moment, please. Have you one daughter only, Jessie Meekeye, who lives with you?

MRS. M. Well, yes, sir. I really cannot do without her.

MR. S. Quite so, Mrs. Meekeye. No apology is needed. Now, do you and your daughter maintain yourselves partly by plain sewing and partly by letting off certain of your rooms as apartments?

MRS. M. Well, yes, sir. I'm obliged to do something to help out what we can earn by plain sewing.

JUDGE. Really, my good woman, I don't see why you should hesitate or apologise in making admission that you and your—er—no doubt equally amiable daughter, earn your joint and—er—several livings by such—er—honourable and—er—straightforward means.

MR. S. And I take leave to heartily concur in your lordship's sentiment.

MRS. M. (*curtseying to JUDGE*) And I'm sure I'm truly thankful for your lawship's kind enc'oragement. (*wipes her eyes*)

MR. S. May I enquire, Mrs. Meekeye, what is your daughter's age?

MRS. M. (*nervously, and looking round fearfully at her daughter, who frowns and shakes her head vigorously at her*

mother) Well, please, sir, if you'll kindly please excuse me——

MR. S. (*following her apprehensive glances and smiling*) Oh, I see ! We may let that little matter rest for the present. Now, among other lodgers, have you a gentleman of the name of Peter Pendrudge ?

MRS. M. Yes, sir, I have.

MR. S. The Plaintiff, in fact, in this present action ?

MRS. M. Yes, sir ; I'm sorry to say he is.

MR. S. Don't indulge in any sentiment, Mrs. Meekeye, please. Just simply answer my questions. (MRS. MEEKEYE *curtseys*) Was, and is, Mr. Pendrudge what you would call a good lodger ?

MRS. M. Oh, yes, sir ! He is a most respectable, well-behaved young gentleman.

MR. S. I'm glad to hear you say so, madam. Does he keep good, regular, and reasonable hours, and always pay his stipulated terms ?

MRS. M. Yes, sir, until——

MR. S. I'm coming to that period now, Mrs. Meekeye. Until he unfortunately became disengaged or unemployed ?

MRS. M. Yes, sir, if you please.

MR. S. Then, of course, you were made aware of his inability to continue his regular payments ?

MRS. M. (*sighing*) Yes, sir, I was. And very sorry I was for the poor young gentleman.

MR. S. He owes you for several weeks' board and lodgings ?

MRS. M. Yes, sir, he does.

MR. S. And yet you still allow him to remain with you ?

MRS. M. Well, yes, sir. I believe he's nowhere else to go.

MR. S. You must be very kind and sympathetic to him.

MRS. M. Yes, sir, please ; and thank you. (*curtseys*)

MR. S. Has Mr. Pendrudge made any efforts to obtain employment—I mean, so far as *you* are aware ?

MRS. M. Yes, sir ; I'm sure he has.

MR. S. Has he also occasionally given you odd sums of money which he has won in certain competitions in well-known periodicals, and also money which he has had to "raise" ?

MRS. M. Yes, sir ; poor fellow ; he's done his best, which no man can't do no more than that which.

MR. S. Quite so, Mrs. Meekeye. Has he also insisted upon having fewer meals in your house ; and even offered to vacate his rooms in favour of a more profitable lodger ?

MRS. M. He has, indeed, sir. But I wouldn't hear to him going, as I was sure he'd have better luck some day.

MR. S. Very good, Mrs. Meekeye. Very good, of *you* I mean, of course. Speaking generally and conscientiously, do you really believe, as to the Plaintiff, that he feels his present unemployed condition very keenly, and that he is in every way worthy of your sympathy and confidence?

MRS. M. Oh, yes. I do believe all that, sir, and thank you ! (MR. S. *sits down*, and MRS. M. *goes to stand down*, but)

MR. H. (*rising*) Pardon me, Mrs.—ah—Meekeye ; but I have a question or two I would like to ask you.

MRS. M. (*resuming her position*) Oh, I'm sure I humbly beg your pardon, sir ; but have I done any harm ? I really didn't mean no offence, so please don't be hard on a poor widow woman, sir.

MR. H. Oh, no ; I won't be too severe upon you, but I must impress upon you the necessity of your being very careful in your replies. Now, your kindly interest in and sympathy with your lodger, the Plaintiff, Mr. Peter Pendrudge, may be highly commendable and entirely *bonâ fide*. But, and *herein* lies my warning as to being careful, do you *swear* that no ulterior motive underlies your sympathy and interest ?

MRS. M. (*with "tears in her voice"*) Well, sir barristerial counsellor, I'm a poor woman, but I hope a honest one at the same time. There's nothing *boney* about me ; I never *swear*, or hardly ever, unless I'm *dreadfully* angry ; I've no wrong motives towards no one ; and there's neither *under-lies* nor *over-lies* in what I says and does ! (*puts her handkerchief to her eyes and weeps ; laughter in court*)

JUDGE. (*sternly*) I do not think it shows good feeling, or even good breeding, on the part of those who thus ridicule this well meaning, but perhaps not very—er—well learned woman's misapprehension of the Counsel's question ! May I suggest, Mr. Handsome, that you frame your questions in somewhat simpler language.

MR. H. I will endeavour to comply with your lordship's request. Now, Mrs. Meekeye, let me see if I can simplify my query : Does your daughter share your interest and sympathy towards Mr. Pendrudge ?

MRS. M. Oh, yes, sir ; quite, thank you, please.

MR. H. Is it not a case—so far as your daughter's feelings are concerned towards Mr. Pendrudge—of *pity* being akin to *love* ?

MRS. M. Well, sir, I must admit—though, I believe, it's a dead secret—as the young people have a sort of feeling towards each other.

MR. H. So, of course, your willingness to allow Mr. Pendrudge to remain with you, was prompted chiefly by your desire to keep him one of the family, so to speak?

MRS. M. Well, sir, I—ahem!—well, *we* did have some little hopes of—— (*stops confusedly*)

MR. H. (*smiling*) I think the Court will understand that expressive pause, Mrs. Meekeye! (*resumes his seat*)

MRS. M. Yes, sir, and thank you kindly. (*stands down*)

MR. MALE. (*rising and calling*) Jessie Meekeye!

JESSIE MEEKEYE *rather belies her name, being a bright-eyed maiden of, say, twenty-five to thirty years old, with overflowing fringe and somewhat showy "get up" and deportment. She takes her place in the witness-box with confidence and self-possession. MR. MALEMAN is a young, nervous, and rather flurried barrister.*

MR. MALE. You are—I mean to say, I think your name is Jessie Meekeye?

JESSIE MEEKEYE. Oh, yes; that's *my* name, Mr. Maleman, every time.

MR. MALE. You are—I mean to say—I understand you are the daughter of the previous witness?

J. M. You may say it, and mean it as a dead cert, Mr. Maleman. Don't I look it?

JUDGE. (*sternly*) Whatever you may *look*, young—er—lady, you certainly do not *sound* it?

J. M. Oh, indeed! In which way don't I *sound* it, please, Justice Tryfairly? (MR. SCRIBEWELL and MR. MALEMAN *shake their heads and briefs at JESSIE MEEKEYE*)

JUDGE. In the way of modesty, of demeanour, and in respect and reverence towards the representatives of the law of the realm, young—er—lady! Pray do not let us have any more such impertinences and flippancies.

J. M. I beg your pardon, Sir Something Tryfairly, and you shan't have any more of 'em. Not another pert nor a flip!

MR. MALE. (*after JUDGE had nodded to him*) You have heard the evidence given by the preceding witness—I mean to say your mother?

J. M. Oh, yes, Mr. Maleman. I heard every word of it.

MR. MALE. Do you endorse what the previous—I mean to say what your mother said?

J. M. Endorse? How do you mean endorse, Mr. Maleman?

MR. MALE. Do you confirm or corroborate your mother's evidence?

J. M. Do I? Well, what do *you* think, Mr. Maleman?

MR. MALE. Answer my question, please. Do you, or do you not—I mean to say—agree with or confirm that evidence?

J. M. Well, what kind of a daughter do you think I am?

JUDGE. (*severely*) Answer the question *at once*, witness.

J. M. (*meekly*) I'm sorry I vexed you, sir. Yes, sir, and thank you, please.

MR. MALE. I don't think—er—I mean to say—— (*sits down*)

MR. LOVELADY. (*rising to cross-examine and smiling at JESSIE MEEKEYE*) Now—aw—Miss—aw—Meekeye—I have just a question or two to—aw—put to you, and I'm sure I shall—aw—find you to be a sensible, and—aw—an intelligent young lady.

J. M. Thank you Mr., *aw*—I really forget your name? (*laughter and suppression*)

JUDGE. Permit me to point out, Miss—er—Meekeye, that it is not usual or even—er—allowable for witnesses to address the counsel or the judge by their name. Simply use “sir” at the end of your replies to counsel.

J. M. All right, sir—I'll try to remember.

MR. L. You say “m'lord” to the judge when you—aw—happen to address or reply to him, Miss Meekeye.

J. M. All right, my lord, sir. How's that, referee?

JUDGE. (*after the resultant laughter has been suppressed*) This young person is either grossly ignorant or—er—wilfully irreverent. You had better be careful, miss! You look old enough to know better! (*laughter*)

J. M. (*indignantly*) Old! *Me*, old, indeed! (*USHERS shout “Silence!”*)

MR. L. Allow me to—aw—to advise you to—aw—comport yourself with more respect and decorum towards his lordship, and the—aw—court, or you may find yourself committed for contempt, young—aw—lady!

J. M. Committed for *content*! Does that mean being sent to gaol? (*in an awestruck stage whisper*)

MR. L. That would be for his lordship to determine; but most probably it would. So do be careful. Now—aw—I should like to know exactly how your lodger, that is, Mr.—aw—Pendrudge, the—aw—Plaintiff, seems to feel his—aw—rather unfortunate—aw—position?

J. M. Feel it? Well, *I* think he feels it very feelingly, if you ask *me* anythink?

MR. L. Ashow? That is to say, does he appear to *suffer*?

J. M. Suffer? *Suffer's* no name for it, m'lord—ahem—sir.

MR. L. Kindly describe his—aw—general conduct and carriage.

J. M. Well, his conduct's all right ; but his *carriage* ! why, good gracious me, he hasn't had not so much as a *bike* for months, now ! (*laughter*).

MR. L. You—aw—misunderstand me, Miss—aw—Meekeye.

JUDGE. I think the witness had better under-stand down !

MR. L. (*bowing*) With great deference, m'lord, I have one more question to ask her. Now, Miss—aw—Meekeye, is there that tender feeling between the Plaintiff and yourself to which my learned friend and colleague alluded ?

J. M. (*winking*) Ah, now, you're touching a tender spot ! *That's* the kind of question I *don't* care to answer. You must ask me another, love—I mean sir ! I—aw——

(*But MR. LOVELADY suddenly subsides into his seat, and the JUDGE, with silent anger, motions to an USHER, who taps JESSIE MEEKEYE on the shoulder, and conducts her out of witness-box.*)

MR. MALE. (*rising and calling*) Matthew Manley ! (*MATTHEW MANLEY goes into witness-box*)

MR. MALE. You are—I mean to say your name is Matthew Manley ?

MR. MAN. I am ; it is, sir.

MR. MALE. Er—I mean to say—I beg your pardon ?

MR. MAN. That is to say, I *am* Matthew Manley, and *that* is my name.

MR. MALE. Oh, yes ; quite so. Thank you, Mr.—er—Manley. Now, I think you are, if you will excuse my saying so, the secretary of the Male Clerks' Association ?

MR. MAN. I am, sir.

MR. MALE. Was that society promoted, and is it not—I mean to say—maintained for the—er—laudable purpose of assisting clerks, bookkeepers, and so forth, both to obtain situations and also to relieve their necessities when—er—unemployed ?

MR. MAN. Right first guess, sir.

MR. MALE. I—er—-I mean to say—what did you say ?

MR. MAN. I said right first guess, sir.

JUDGE. (*sternly*) That is a very impertinent answer, sir. I would have you understand this is not a guessing competition, but a civil action at law.

MR. MAN. I beg your lordship's pardon, and will try to give more satisfactory solutions—I mean answers.

JUDGE. Ah, it is evident to me, Mr.—er—Manley, that your mind is, or has been, running on prize competitions.

MR. MAN. Yes, my lord. I do go in for them pretty often.

JUDGE. Well, I can only say that if you--er--persist in thus "going in" for them, the chances are that you will be going out of your mind through them!

MR. MALE. (*to whom JUDGE has nodded to resume*) I--er--take it for granted, Mr. Manley, that you have a large number of members in your association?

MR. MAN. Oh, yes, sir. I have not the exact figures with me, but I do know that our membership runs into several thousands.

MR. MALE. I think—I mean to say, is not the Plaintiff, Mr. Pendrudge, a member of your association?

MR. MAN. He is, sir.

MR. MALE. Have you not usually a very large number of your members disengaged or unemployed?

MR. MAN. I am sorry to say that is so, sir.

MR. MALE. I--er--quite assume that membership in or of your association is strictly confined to the sterner sex?

JUDGE. Did you say the--er--*sterner*--sex, Mr. Maleman?

MR. MALE. I--er—I mean to say with great submission, I did, m'lord.

JUDGE. (*smiling*) You should say so with "great submission" to the--er--trend,—I think "trend" is the word our press friends would use? (*Press men all rise, bow, and sit again, without stopping their writing*) The trend, then, of modern ideas and happenings, Mr. Maleman, for I often find myself wondering *which* is the "sterner" sex nowadays! (*cries of "Hear, hear!" laughter, etc., as before*)

MR. S. (*rising and bowing*) I thank your lordship for that observation! (*sits down again*)

JUDGE. But--er—I am only speaking in a *general* sense, and without the faintest--er--prejudice for or against the progress or interests of the parties in this action.

MR. H. (*rising and bowing*) I am deeply indebted to your lordship for that important reservation! (*resumes his seat*)

MR. MALE. Now--er—Mr. Manley, do you--er—I mean to say—make a point of ascertaining why, or through what cause your members become disengaged or unemployed?

MR. MAN. Certainly, sir.

MR. MALE. Thank you, sir—I mean to say—can you tell me any one principal cause or reason why, say, the majority of them are thrown out of employment?

MR. MAN. Oh, that's an easy one, sir. *The great and sufficient reason or cause why and wherefore the members—who are males only—of our association are thrown out of*

work is through female competition ; that is to say because female clerks are engaged in their place or stead.

MR. MALE. Thanks, awf'ly—I mean to say—— (*sits down*)

MR. L. (*rising to cross-examine*) Now—aw—Mr.—aw—Manley, please be very—aw—careful how you reply to my—aw—interrogations.

MR. MAN. Your—how much ?

MR. L. My interrogations, sir. I think that is a plain English word, is it not—aw ?

MR. MAN. Well, it did rather *awe* me. (*laughter*) But I will use every care in replying to your much esteemed favour.

MR. L. Yes. You—aw—rather fancy yourself, I should imagine, Mr.—aw—Manley. But to proceed : Are there not other and equally powerful reasons besides the one you gave for your members becoming unemployed ?

MR. MAN. There *are* others ; but——

MR. L. I don't ask for any “buts,” Mr.—aw—Manley. Please answer my inquiry.

MR. MAN. Dear sir, in reply to your esteemed inquiry, I beg to say that, while there *are* other reasons, I consider the one I gave, namely, female opposition, to be the chief or principal one, every time.

MR. L. As you admit there are others, I will—aw—test your remarkable 'cuteness in guessing competitions, and ask you a question or two. Then his lordship and the gentlemen of the jury may decide as to *which* is—aw—the principal, or—aw—chief reason.

MR. MAN. Very good, sir.

MR. L. Is not drinking, or rather—aw—drunkenness a very important cause ?

MR. MAN. It is *not*, sir. Nine-tenths of our members are total abstainers.

MR. L. Does not—aw—gambling seriously affect the question ?

MR. MAN. No, sir. Only a *small* proportion of our members have ever been dismissed from their employment for such a reason.

MR. L. How about *foreign* competition ?

MR. MAN. Ah, *now* you're getting warmer, sir.

MR. L. I—aw—beg your pardon, sir, I am in no *heat* of temper whatever !

MR. MAN. Oh, no, I mean you are getting nearer the mark. The employment of foreign clerks does fill *many* spaces in our “disengaged” book, but not nearly to such a degree as does *female* opposition.

MR. L. Then you—aw—still adhere to your original—aw—statement?

MR. MAN. Oh, yes, sir. Having made a statement which I am in a position to prove, I stick to my guns, and if I may ask you a question, sir, is it not the real true British way of doing?

MR. L. Well, at all events, it is the—aw—*Manley* way of maintaining the—aw—position you have assumed. (*he resumes his seat and MR. MANLEY stands down*)

MR. S. (*rising and bowing to the court*) That, m'lord and gentlemen of the jury, is my case.

MR. H. (*rising to open for the defence*) M'lord and gentlemen of the jury, in rising to open for the fair defendant, I should like to observe that I scarcely know whether or not to treat this action as a huge joke——

MR. S. (*rising to interpose*) Allow me, m'lord and gentlemen of the jury, to assure my learned friend that this action is *not* any size or kind of a joke; but that we are very much in earnest; while, at the same time, we intend this case to be a test case. (*sits down*)

MR. H. Very good. We quite accept it as a “test-and-try-before-you-buy” kind of case. A sample case, so to speak, of old-fashioned prejudices *versus* more modern, new century broadmindedness. I submit and maintain that this alleged test case is enough to make us all, from his lordship on the bench to the humblest officer at the door of this court, quite testy at our risibility, patience and forbearance being thus “tested,” for surely in all the annals of legal proceedings a more frivolous and vexatious action was never entered in any cause list. What is the chief cause of complaint against the Defendant, Miss Ethel Prettiwon? Why, that she has been naturally endowed with youth and beauty—youth and beauty!—the gifts of the gods; gifts which happily are given not alone to maidens, but in some favoured cases to men also! (*Here the JUDGE, MR. HANDSOME, and other BARRISTERS, and one or two USHERS, and the big POLICEMAN cough, draw themselves up, smile, wink, etc., ad lib.*) But it is urged the Defendant, this scheming syren, used her natural gifts for the fell purpose of procuring for herself—what? Wealth, fame, position? No; but an office-stool; a situation whereby she might work for a small wage, and thus earn her own or *part* of her own living. And so she sent a photo and used various inducements and blandishments to persuade a certain employer to give her employment. Now, I will venture with the greatest respect, deference, and submission to put it to your lordship; if you were about to apply for, say,

a Lord Chancellorship, or the position of Lord Chief Justice, would you not put on your best wig and gown, and do your best to look your best? If any of my learned brethren were seeking the higher emoluments and easier times of a county-court or police-court judgeship or magistracy, would they not do likewise? If any of you gentlemen of the jury were seeking, estimating, or in any way endeavouring to seek for advancement or advantage in position or business would you not try hard to get there? Yes! if the very harmless necessary ushers and policemen here before us were going in for promotion in the service they so worthily adorn, would they not then indulge in an extra wash and brush-up, and do their level best to make a good impression? (*business of "appreciation" by JUDGE and others named*) Yet that is mainly why the Defendant has been sued; because she curled her hair, or "did up" her hair in the most attractive and suitable manner; put on her best "bib and tucker"—I regret that I cannot more specifically describe her costume and other decorations—and, after making a favourable impression beforehand by means of a photo, she pays her prospective employer a personal visit, and he, poor innocent, lamb-like creature, falls a "victim," an easy prey to the attractions of this modern syren! But I feel convinced that to an assemblage of twelve clear-headed, intellectual, yet business-like men of the world, such as I see before me in that jury-box, that phase of this action—I allude to the *absurdity*—must have struck them long since, if not from the very inception of the case. I will not therefore waste your time further, but call upon the fair Defendant herself, who shall testify of her *bonâ fide*, honest, and straightforward intentions. Let us have up Ethel Prettiwon!

USHERS call out the name, and ETHEL PRETTIWON takes her place in the witness-box. She should, of course, bear out her name in appearance, being ladylike in both looks, dress, and bearing, though calm and self-confident.

MR. H. Is your name Ethel Prettiwon?

ETH. Yes, it is.

MR. H. Do you reside, with your parents and brother and sisters, on the outskirts of this town?

ETH. Yes, I do.

MR. H. Did your father, a year or two ago, impress upon you the necessity for trying to obtain some employment or engagement by which you might earn or help to earn your living?

ETH. Yes, he did.

MR. H. Is not your father himself a bookkeeper?

ETH. Yes, he is.

MR. H. And have you always had, from your schooldays onward, rather a partiality for figures?

ETH. Yes, I have.

MR. H. Did you attend a bookkeeping class in order to attain the requisite proficiency?

ETH. Yes, I did.

MR. H. And I believe you gained a prize and a note of commendation from the master under whom you studied?

ETH. Yes, I did.

MR. H. Now, when looking through the newspapers, in your search for a situation, was Mr. Buysell's advertisement the *first* one to catch your eye?

ETH. Yes, it was.

JUDGE. Young lady; have you not observed that all other witnesses, with the sole exception of that—er—forward and—er—impertinent young person, who has recently retired—all *other* witnesses said “sir,” at the end of their replies?

ETH. I daresay, but I never say *sir* to any gentleman. And I never met any *gentleman* who *expected* me to say it.

JUDGE. In my young days, miss, young ladies said “sir” to their own fathers, as a matter of course!

ETH. Yes, I have read about those silly milksops who would burst into a flood of tears if any one scolded them.

JUDGE. (*warmly*) Those were the days, miss, when men and maidens knew their proper places, and kept them!

MR. S. (*rising and bowing*) I thank your lordship for that remark. (*sits down*)

JUDGE. Of course I speak entirely without prejudice for or against this case now before me.

MR. H. (*bowing*) I am obliged to your lordship for that reservation. Now, Miss Prettiwon, allow me to counsel you to observe his lordship's excellent advice as to treating—ah—well such as myself with due respect. Now, as to that photo. Did you have it taken specially for the purpose or occasion of sending it to Mr. Buysell?

ETH. Oh, dear, no! It was just one I had taken two or three years ago; and as I happened to have one by me I thought I might as well send it to Mr. Buysell.

MR. H. Was any question or matter of grievance mentioned to you as to your supplanting the Plaintiff?

ETH. Not a word, not a breath, not a syllable, Mr. Handsome.

MR. H. Could you possibly have had any object in displaying any spite, ill-will, or prejudice against the Plaintiff?

ETH. Certainly not, Mr. Handsome. Why, I didn't even know his name !

(MR. HANDSOME resumes his seat, and MR. SCRIBEWELL rises to cross-examine.)

MR. S. I think you have told the Court, Miss Prettiwon, that no question was raised as to your supplanting the Plaintiff?

ETH. That is quite correct.

MR. S. Were you not made aware by Mr. Buysell himself that he was about discharging male clerks and filling their places with lady clerks?

ETH. I *did* understand that such was the case.

MR. S. Therefore you must have been aware that you were displacing or supplanting *someone*, even though you might not know his name?

ETH. Well, I suppose that is a self-evident proposition.

MR. S. Quite so. Now, we have heard a little keynote harped upon, to wit, your earning your living, or assisting to earn your living, or keep. I must ask you to tell me, to tell his lordship, and the gentlemen of the jury, if you *depend* upon your earnings, as lady clerk?

ETH. Of course not !

MR. S. I presume you retain *most* of your salary as, shall we call it, pin-money, or dress allowance.

ETH. Certainly I do.

MR. S. To revert to the Plaintiff: Did he not cause a letter to be written to you from the "Male Clerks' Association," urging you and other young ladies in the same office who could afford to do so, to make way for him and others?

ETH. He did.

MR. S. Did you not cause a reply to be sent through the Lady Clerks' Mutual Interest and Betterment Society to the effect that you would do nothing of the kind ; and also that your Society was quite prepared to take up and contest the matter in any Court of Law, at any time with his Association?

ETH. (*proudly*) That's just what I did do.

MR. S. I note in your replies to your own counsel and myself you have omitted the polite affix recommended by his lordship.

ETH. Well, what about it?

MR. S. I am just about to inquire if you have ever, or if you do ever say "sir" to your employer, Mr. Buysell?

ETH. Certainly not, and he never asked or expected me to say it.

MR. S. Has he not, on the contrary, asked and expected you to call him by a much more familiar term ?

ETH. What do you mean ? (*embarrassed and looking round*)

MR. S. Has he not asked you—strictly between yourselves—to call him “Ikey,” and “Old Boy ?”

ETH. Oh—I—er—(*stops confusedly, and looks to MR. B. who kisses his hand to her, and shakes other fist at MR. S.*)

MR. S. Thank you, Miss Prettiwon (*sits down and ETHEL stands down*)

MR. H. (*rising and calling*) John Prettiwon !

JOHN PRETTIWON, *who is an elderly, shortsighted, nervous, and very plain gentleman, goes into the witness-box.*

MR. H. Are you John Prettiwon ?

MR. PRETTIWON. I—er—well, yes ; I am, sir.

MR. H. Are you the father of the Defendant ?

MR. P. Well—er—you see—er—yes, I am, sir.

JUDGE. I should have thought *that* fact would have been—er—well established in your mind by now, Mr. Prettiwon.

MR. H. (*after laughter has subsided*) I understand you have also other daughters as well as Miss Ethel ?

MR. P. Well—er—well, really, sir—yes, I’m afraid I have.

MR. H. *How* many more daughters have you ?

MR. P. (*counts on his fingers*) Let me see, now. (*counts*) Yes ; four, sir.

MR. H. Making a grand total, with Miss Ethel, of *five* daughters ?

MR. P. (*counts fingers again*) Er—yes, sir ; quite correct.

MR. H. Have you any sons ?

MR. P. Only one, I’m afraid, sir. But he’s only a mere child.

MR. H. You are yourself a bookkeeper, I think ?

MR. P. Er—well—yes, sir. I cannot deny *that*.

MR. H. You only earn an average bookkeeper’s salary, I suppose ?

MR. P. That is all, sir, really.

MR. H. Have you any assurance of your employment being a permanent one ?

MR. P. Oh—er—no, sir ; not **at all**. Rather the—er—contrary.

MR. H. What do you mean by “rather the contrary” ?

MR. P. I have lately been asked whether I would prefer to remain in my present situation at a much lower salary or to—er—retire altogether at about one-third of it ?

MR. H. Was it at your own request that your daughters, each and all, have gone forth to work for their own living ?

MR. P. Well—er—yes, sir. I'm afraid I must plead guilty to *that*.

MR. H. And among others of your daughters, did you elect to place Ethel in the situation of a lady clerk because of her fondness and aptitude for figures and figuring?

MR. P. Er—oh, yes, sir!—quite—er—quite yes, sir.

MR. H. Were you fully convinced of the advisability—nay, the *necessity*—for your daughters being independent of you?

MR. P. Oh—er—quite—er—quite fully, sir, indeed!

MR. H. You have not been able to make provision for your wife and family in case of your demise, I presume?

MR. P. Oh, no, sir; quite impossible really. It has always taken us all our time to—er—to, well to make both ends meet on my limited salary. I'm very sorry, but, really, I couldn't do any better.

MR. H. No apology is needed, thank you, Mr. Prettiwon. (*sits down, and MR. SCRIBEWELL rises to cross-examine*)

MR. S. You are a professional bookkeeper, Mr. Prettiwon?

MR. P. Well, sir—er—really; yes, I'm sure I am.

MR. S. In your young days, I take it, lady clerks were comparatively, if not actually, unknown.

MR. P. Oh, yes, almost quite, sir.

MR. S. May I enquire if you believe in the efficiency and desirability of lady clerks, and of their being employed?

MR. P. Well—er—really sir, that is an awkward question.

MR. S. In what or which way is it an awkward question?

MR. P. Because, sir, as a bookkeeper, a—er—male clerk, in fact, I'm rather opposed to them, but as the—er—well, the father of a lady clerk, I—er—rather believe in them.

MR. S. A matter of being between two office stools, eh? (*he sits and MR. PRETTIWON stands down*)

MR. H. Isaac Buysell! (*MR. BUYSSELL duly enters the witness-box, and is "sworn"*) Are you Isaac Buysell?

MR. B. I am, sir.

MR. H. You are, I think, a general merchant?

MR. B. I am.

MR. H. You were formerly the employer of the Plaintiff?

MR. B. Yes, sir.

MR. H. And you are the present employer of the Defendant?

MR. B. I have that honour and pleasure, sir. (*looks affectionately towards ETHEL*)

JUDGE. Pray, Mr.—er—Buysell, do not allow your—er—glances to wander all over the court, but fix your attention on—er—the Counsel. (*MR. BUYSELL bows*)

MR. H. In making the change in your office—I mean from male to female clerks—were you not much influenced by the fact that other employers of clerical workers had taken similar steps, and with success?

MR. B. I was, sir.

MR. H. In advertising for female clerks did you ask or insist that the applicants should be of “prepossessing appearance”—as our Press friends term it? (*PRESSMEN rise, etc., as before*)

MR. B. Certainly not, sir. I required the young ladies for *work*, not for *show*.

MR. H. So that the fact of the Defendant, as one of the applicants, being of decidedly “prepossessing appearance”—to use once again that stock phrase (*REPORTERS’ “business” as before*) was simply what one might term a happy chance?

MR. B. Well, I suppose so.

JUDGE. Just as it might be, Mr.—er—Buysell, if you—er—advertised for a housemaid, and a pretty girl, or one of “prepossessing appearance”—as that seems to be the favourite term—(*REPORTERS rise, etc., as before, amidst much laughter*) applied, I presume you would take care that such maid were appointed? (*laughter*)

MR. B. Well, I am a lonely bachelor, my lord—er—so far, and, therefore, have not much to do with the selection of servants.

JUDGE. I see, but you may find your appreciation of pretty faces may either come in useful, or lead you sadly astray some day, Mr.—er—Buysell. (*laughter*)

MR. B. (*bowing*) I will bear in mind your lordship’s warning.

MR. H. Now, Mr. Buysell, will you please inform this Court if you find the change, from male to female clerks, to have been a change for the better?

MR. B. (*emphatically*) Most certainly I *do* find it so.

MR. H. And can you declare, on your oath, that the Defendant is both useful as well as ornamental?

MR. B. Most decidedly and emphatically I can and do say so, sir. (*Is looking round again towards ETHEL, when he catches the JUDGE’s eye, and “recovers.”*)

MR. H. You are quite satisfied as to the result of the change and as to the abilities of Defendant?

MR. B. I am—I am more than satisfied, sir!

(*Business of looking round and recovering as before.*

MR. HANDSOME *sits down.*)

MR. S. (*rising to cross-examine*) I understand, Mr. Buysell, that you are a merchant in a large way of business?

MR. B. Well—er—fairly so, sir.

MR. S. Not to ask you to name the exact sum, may we conclude that your profits per annum generally run into four, and occasionally into five figures?

MR. B. I do not care to commit myself to any such admission.

MR. S. But can you deny the statement? (MR. BUYSSELL *remains silent*)

JUDGE. (*smiling*) I think you need scarcely press that question, Mr. Scribewell.

MR. S. (*also smiling*) Quite so, my lord. I think this is an instance where “silence is golden”! Well, then, Mr. Buysell, you have told the Court that your making the change—from male to female clerks—was not done merely for “decorative” purposes?

MR. B. Most certainly not, sir; but for strictly *practical* purposes. Also for purposes of economy.

MR. S. I see. You discharged the Plaintiff and other male clerks, and replaced them by engaging Defendant, and other fair ladies, at considerably lower salaries, so as to economise your working expenses?

MR. B. Just so, sir. It was simply a matter of business.

MR. S. Simply a matter of turning adrift several respectable and competent men, so that you might possibly add another figure or so to that little income of yours? (MR. BUYSSELL *remains silent*)

JUDGE. I think that also is a question you need not press, Mr. Scribewell.

MR. S. (*bowing*) I rather imagine it is a self-evident proposition, m’lord. Now, Mr. Buysell, I think you have told this Court that you are a lonely bachelor?

MR. B. I have, sir. I am a single man.

MR. S. Did not that, shall we say, *deplorable* fact have something to do with your engaging the clerical services of the Defendant?

MR. B. (*blusteringly*) What—what do you mean, sir?

MR. S. Had you not some faint hopes, or *have* you not some idea now, that a much more personal and agreeable *engagement* may ensue?

(MR. BUYSSELL *again remains silent, but looks towards* ETHEL.)

JUDGE. (*smiling*) I fancy this is another instance where “silence is golden,” Mr. Scribewell.

MR. S. Yes, m’lord; also that “love hath eyes.”

(*Sits down, and MR. BUYSSELL leaves the witness box and goes to ETHEL and talks with her.*)

MR. LOVE. (*rising and calling*) Josiah Pompous !

(*This witness should bear out his name by his pompous style, deportment, and manner of speaking. He enters the box.*)

MR. LOVE. You are—I—aw—rather think your name is Josiah Pompous ?

MR. P. That is my name, sir ; an old family county name dating from the reign of Henry the Seventh ! One of my ancestors——

JUDGE. Really, Mr.—er—Pompous, your family history is no doubt very—er—interesting, but this is scarcely the time or the—er—place in which to detail it.

MR. L. (*after MR. POMPOUS has bowed to JUDGE, who then nods to MR. LOVELADY*) You are a merchant in a large way of business ?

MR. P. *My* business, sir, was established two hundred years ago, and is now one of the *largest* and best known in the world.

MR. L. You employ many clerks, bookkeepers and—aw—assistants, both male and fe—that is to say ladies ?

MR. P. I have one of the largest, most respectable and best behaved staffs of lady and gentleman workers in the United Kingdom, sir.

MR. L. Are you not the honourable—in other words—aw—the honorary chairman of the Commercial Employers' Union ?

MR. P. I *have* the honour, sir, to occupy that important position, with what satisfaction I leave others to testify !

MR. L. Now—aw—is not Mr. Buysell a member of that same Union ?

MR. P. Mr. Buysell is a much esteemed and valued member of that same Union, sir.

MR. L. Did Mr. Buysell consult you, both in your own private person and also—aw—in your—aw—official capacity as Honorary Chairman of the Union as to the advisability or otherwise of his employing fe—I should say—aw—lady clerks ?

MR. P. He *did* do me that honour, sir.

MR. L. And what was your advice ?

MR. P. Having regard to my own long, large and wholly satisfactory experience, I warmly counselled him to forthwith take the step he was contemplating.

MR. L. And did the others—that is to say—did the—aw—Union also, as a body, endorse your advice ?

MR. P. They did, sir ; as they customarily and wisely do.

MR. L. And did you—aw—— (*stops to consult his brief*)

MR. P. Yes, sir, I *did* owe them ; as I usually do ! (MR. LOVELADY *stares at MR. POMPOUS, then sits down*)

MR. S. (*rising*) I have advised my learned junior, m'lord, not to cross-examine this witness. Life is too short, in my humble opinion, to take up the time of this Court with any more of his verbose evidence ! (*sits down, and MR. POMPOUS retires*)

MR. H. (*rises*) M'lord and gentlemen of the jury, that is my case, and I humbly and respectfully submit that I have amply set forth and proved by wholly unimpeachable evidence that the Plaintiff has failed miserably and thoroughly to establish the faintest shadow of reason for thus suing the Defendant ; nay, more, that on the extreme contrary, the Defendant has fully proved a good and sufficient case against the Plaintiff, entitling her to a substantial solatium for her wounded feelings, loss of time, and the cruel attempt to interfere with what not only English men but also English *women* so dearly prize — I mean the liberty of the subject.

(*Here he is plucked by the gown by MR. LOVELADY, with whom and with the principal parties to the suit, he holds a whispered consultation.*)

CLERK OF COURT. Counsel for the Plaintiff, have you any reply ?

MR. S. (*rising after speaking aside to other counsel*) I find, happily, it will scarcely be necessary for me to do so, as my learned friend, the counsel for the Defendant, will presently explain.

MR. H. (*rising, bowing to JUDGE and MR. SCRIBEWELL, and smiling*) My lord, I have a most interesting announcement to make, and one which I think will give great satisfaction to your lordship and to all the parties concerned in this suit. I am authorised, nay requested to say that Mr. Buysell, the employer of the Defendant, having, as a matter of fact, for some time past cherished a feeling of affection for the Defendant, which I submit does credit alike to his head and her heart, has *now*, quietly, but effectually, made her an offer of marriage, which she has accepted subject to these conditions : That the Plaintiff, Mr. Peter Pendrudge, be at once, and as a permanency reinstated at an increased salary in Mr. Buysell's counting-house, and that this action be at once, with your lordship's concurrence, quashed, each side paying its own costs by and through the two bodies represented, that is to say the Male Clerks' Association defraying the Plaintiff's and the Lady Clerks' Society the Defendant's costs. So far as I am concerned my client is quite agreeable.

MR. S. (*rising*) And for my client and his Association I cordially accept those terms.

JUDGE. (*smiling*) Well—er—really, this is a most satisfactory, not to say—er—felicitous termination to a seemingly unhappy difference ; and I sincerely and heartily concur in the arrangement, wishing all the parties concerned a long and happy enjoyment of this new, altered and improved state of being.

Counsel and principal parties shake hands, kiss, etc., and curtains lowered or drawn to strains of Wedding March.

NOTICE.

The attention of those who take part in or organise dramatic representations should be called to the law on copyright. All representations of copyright dramatic works are liable to fees where money or consideration be taken for admission, tickets or programmes sold, a collection made, or where any theatre, hall, or other place be hired for such purpose. It is absolutely necessary that the fees for plays should be paid in advance and an authorised permission obtained, otherwise each person taking part, or causing such play to be represented, is severally liable to a penalty or damages. By means of the telegraph injunctions can be obtained to restrain unauthorised performances, which if ignored, would lead to the imprisonment of the offenders. Agents are appointed in all parts of the kingdom, and are empowered to collect fees on behalf of the various authors or proprietors, and to exact full penalties where fees have not been paid in advance. Appended will be found a few of the many cases which have been disposed of in court. Any information on this subject can be obtained by sending a stamped directed envelope to

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2. It is no defence that the performance was in aid of a charity or by amateurs.

In the case of *Byron v. Finch*, tried before Theobald Purcell, Esq., County Court Judge at Limerick, in January, 1880, Mr. Connolly for the defence said:—"Was not the performance in aid of Barrington's Hospital? Mr. Byron wants to prevent us from being charitable here." The Judge said "There is no use in these observations, Mr. Connolly. If the Histrionic Society want to be charitable they cannot be so at Mr. Byron's expense." And in the case of *French v. Styles*, tried at the Bloomsbury County Court, London, in February, 1881, the defendant contended "that as he had not been paid for his services, and the performance was for the benefit of another member of the Club, he was not liable." The Judge, Francis Bacon, Esq., said "The law was very clear, and the defendant was liable."

3. It is immaterial where the performance takes place.

"What is said by all the Judges just comes to this, that the very first time you use a place for the performance of a dramatic piece, that constitutes the place then for the first time a 'Place of Dramatic Entertainment.' '*Palmer v. Brassington.*' " Judgment of Thomas Ellison, Esq., Judge of the County Court of Yorkshire, holden at Sheffield. "The use for the time in question, and not for a former time, is the essential fact. '*Russell v. Smith,*' 12 Q. B., N.S., 217."

4. It is no defence that money was not taken.

"Although in the case of '*Russell v. Smith,*' reference was made to the fact that no charge was made at the door, that was no element at all in considering the question whether a place is a place of Dramatic Entertainment. '*Palmer v. Brassington.*' "

Fees, however, need not be paid for performances taking place in a private dwelling house to invited guests, where no money or consideration be taken for admission, tickets or programmes sold, or a collection made.

5. Performances by Private Clubs.

In the action *French v. Theobalds and others*, judgment was given in the Queen's Bench Division for separate penalties and for costs against the President and Secretary respectively of a Club when a dramatic piece was performed to an audience composed of members, and although no charge was made for admission, the subscription of membership was held to be the consideration for admission."

6. The fee must be paid prior to performance.

In the case of *French v. Dye*, heard at the Camberwell County Court, the defendant contended that he had tendered the fee after the performance, but that the plaintiff had refused to accept it. The Judge said that the law clearly stated that consent in writing of the Author or Proprietor must be first had and obtained, and gave judgment for the plaintiff for the full penalty and costs.

It is not required by law to have a notice printed on a play, to the effect that it is copyright, and a play must not be considered free because it does not contain such notice.

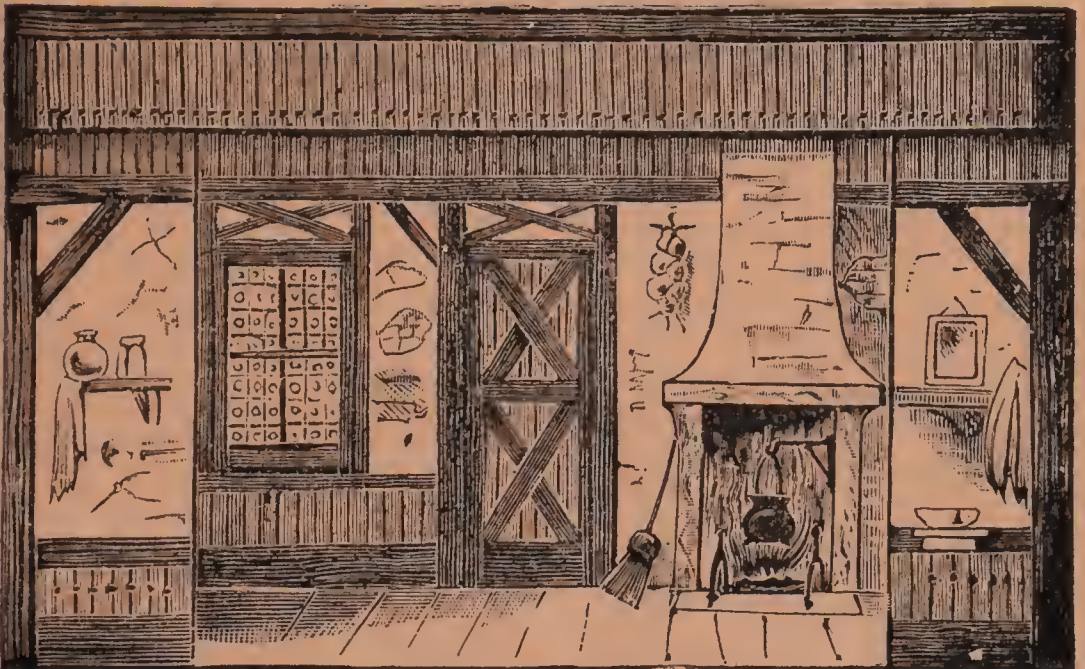
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